



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation *Chief Richard Weber*

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Oregon Alabama Man Sentenced to Prison for Participation in Stolen Identity Refund Fraud Scheme

A Montgomery County, Alabama resident was sentenced to 28 months in prison for his role in a stolen identity refund fraud scheme, announced Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciralo, head of the Justice Department's Tax Division, and U.S. Attorney George L. Beck Jr. of the Middle District of Alabama.

Lambert Derran Smothers aka Main or Mane, 25, admitted that he participated in a conspiracy which used stolen personal identifying information including names, dates of birth and social security numbers to file more than 100 fraudulent income tax returns relating to tax years 2010, 2011 and 2012. On the returns, Smothers and his co-conspirators fraudulently claimed at least \$157,292 in income tax refunds.

"Stolen identity refund crimes cause untold damage and hardship to the individual victims and drain the U.S. Treasury," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Ciralo. "Individuals who engage in this criminal conduct will be prosecuted, and will face prison terms and monetary penalties."

"Protecting tax payer dollars is a priority for my office," said U.S. Attorney Beck. "Identity theft and tax fraud affects too many people in our communities and we must use all available resources under the law to destroy it. I want to thank the IRS Criminal Investigations and the U.S. Secret Service for identifying and shutting down this criminal scheme."

"Stealing from the government is not a way to earn a living," said Special Agent in Charge Veronica Hyman-Pillot for the Internal Revenue Service-Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI). "Lambert Smothers and his associates victimized many taxpayers in their attempt to make quick money. Today's sentencing should emphasize the message that IRS-CI will continue to put forth every effort to identify, investigate, and recommend prosecution on individuals who commit refund fraud."

Smothers pleaded guilty in July to conspiring to defraud the United States, theft of government money and aggravated identity theft. In addition to the term of prison imposed, Smothers was also ordered to serve three years of supervised release and to pay \$81,792.41 in restitution to the IRS.

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Ciralo and U.S. Attorney Beck commended special agents of IRS-CI and the U.S. Secret Service, who conducted the investigation, and Trial Attorneys Gregory P. Bailey and Robert J. Boudreau of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Ross of the Middle District of Alabama, who prosecuted this case.

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